VI

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS FOR 1925-26—*cont.*

Grant XXV—cont.

The debate on Grant No. XXV regarding Fisheries was then resumed.

* Rao Sahib P. V. GOPALAN:—" Mr. President, Sir, I congratulate the hon. the Minister for Development for having come forward now at least with the demand for a sum of Rs. 34,100 for the purpose of purchasing a trawler. Sir, this question has been pending before the Government for the past three or four years; and if I am informed correctly, in the year 1923 when the Government wanted to get down a Danish-cutter fitted with a 'Thornycraft engine' and seine nets for deep-sea fishing, plans and sketches were sent to the High Commissioner for India, but instead of getting down the vessel the description of which was supplied by the Government of Madras, they got down the "Sea-scout". I am told that what happened was this, that "Sea-scout" a sea-going vessel which was ready for sale was bought by the High Commissioner for India instead of getting a vessel made according to the specifications and sketches already sent to him and while correspondence regarding the purchase of "Sea-scout" was passing between the High Commissioner and Government of Madras, he bought up the nets and despatched them to India and this is what I call putting the cart before the house. The nets came several months before the vessel arrived in India. When the vessel arrived in India, Captain Cribb who is an expert in these matters was asked to conduct experiments in deep-sea fishing on the West Coast but he could not take the vessel from the port of Cochin into deep waters so much so that he had to give up the question of conducting experiments by this vessel. It seems to me that the object of the Government in conducting deep-sea fishing could not be achieved because the vessel "Sea-scout" bought by the Government could not bear the weight of the nets inside the vessel and move about. Sir, I know Captain Cribb is an expert in deep-sea fishing and it was he who introduced deep-sea fishing in Japan and also on the Danish Coast. I am told that the Japanese are making fortunes out of this business, and there is no reason why we in Southern India could not have such successful experiments conducted if only we had the vessel and nets which the Director of Fisheries wanted the High Commissioner to buy and send. Now, Sir, though the vessel was found to be useless and the experiments were given up for a time, it does not mean that we should give up deep-sea fishing altogether. I am extremely in favour of conducting experiments in deep sea fishing. All that I have to say is this. We had a wrong vessel instead of the Danish cutter, and I find from the provision here that the hon. the Minister for Development is going to purchase a trawler. I would very strongly urge that this vessel may be utilized not only for the purpose of deep-sea fishing but also for the purpose of transporting salt, because we find just at a time the Government of India reduced the tax on salt from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 1-4-0, the Government of Madras have enhanced the issue price of fish-curing salt from Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 2-8-0 per bag, thus causing great inconvenience, loss and suffering to the poor fisherfolk and fish-curers on the west coast. They were conducting their curing operations with salt earth and Government told them that they could supply them with salt without any duty. This practice

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of curing fish with Government salt continued till April 1924. From April 1924 the Government raised the price of salt from Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 2-8-0 without telling the curers a word of what the Government were going to do. The Government had to do so, it is said, for two reasons. The Government said that they could not meet the full establishment charges and secondly that they could not supply duty-free salt, transport charges of which was so very heavy and as the Government have suffered a loss of Rs. 1,03,500 in the year 1922-1923. Now, if we have a trawler which would in a way help us in reducing the salt transport charges, the fishermen may thereby expect a reduction in the issue price of salt. That is my second point. My third point is this. If we have this vessel, it will be very easy to conduct experiments in deep-sea fishing and will serve the purpose of finding out the breeding and feeding places of various important fishes such as mackerel and sardines; that will be one way of increasing the wealth of the fisher folk on the west coast. In this connexion, I would like to say that the importance of scientific research in relation to fishing industry can never be overrated and it is a matter for congratulation that the Fisheries Department is running a research station at West Hill on the Malabar coast The problems tackled are apparently the mysterious migrations of sardines and mackerel, the two most industrially important fishes of the coast. Incidentally their life histories are being traced. Nearly four years are over since the work commenced and, though a vast amount of useful data have been accumulated, a bulletin entitled 'A contribution to the life history of the Sardine' is the only work published. The information contained in it is not anything new to the intelligent fishermen though, of course, what remained formerly as mere surmises have now been verified scientifically. It also emphasises the necessity of pushing through the investigation soon to enable the fisher community to enjoy the fruits of the commercial application of scientific research. The initial mistake lay in the officers staying ashore waiting for the shoals to come. Instead of their following the shoals, the method is reversed and hence the waste of time and absence of definite information regarding the feeding and breeding grounds of the fish. What is required is a floating laboratory where research can be continuously carried on irrespective of the proximity or otherwise of the shoals to the coast. The microscopic examination of water samples, etc, could be continued there and the results would be more satisfactory as the samples are taken from the localities where fish abound and not otherwise as now The fishing experiments in deep sea can safely be combined with the work of research with advantageous results to both. The feeding and breeding grounds are sure to be located and the receipts accruing from fishing may perhaps even pay the whole of the expenses of this undertaking.

"Hence I make an appeal to the hon. the Minister for Development to buy a vessel for deep-sea fishing which can also have accommodation for research work as well as transport of salt and inspection of the Laccadives and other islands which the Government of Madras have to conduct every year paying very heavy charges for chartering other vessels, as also for the inspection of pearl and chank fisheries. These are my points, Sir, and I very heartily welcome the proposal which has now been placed before the House by the hon. the Minister for Development, and I would make this special appeal that the vessel which he is going to purchase now might have

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all the accommodation and convenience for the other purposes which I have now narrated. Well, Sir, at a sitting of the Advisory Committee for Fisheries and Industries, I remember that they came to the conclusion that the " Sea-scout ", the condemned vessel should be auctioned. I do not know whether the vessel is still existing or whether the Government put it to auction; if so, I wish to know what amount it actually fetched in the auction. With these words, instead of moving the reduction of Rs. 100 of which I gave notice, I request that the hon. the Minister do consider all the points I have just now laid before the House."

At this stage, Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu rose to speak on the motion.

Khan Bahadur HAJI ABDULLA HAJI QUASIM SAHIB (from the chair) :— " No motion for reduction has been made."

Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" Sir, I want your ruling as to whether, when the main motion before the House is one for sanctioning a grant, Members cannot speak on it. No doubt, one of the Members of this House had given notice of a motion for reduction and he has not moved it. But is it not still open to the Members of this House to make any remarks which are otherwise relevant to the original motion before it is finally put? I submit that any Member is at perfect liberty, subject to your ruling, to make any observation supporting or opposing or modifying the grant."

* Rao Sahib P. V. GOPALAN :—" I understand that Capt. Cribb, the gentleman whom the Government of Madras is going to engage for the purpose of conducting these deep-sea fishing experiments, is an expert in making nets. I know, as a matter of fact, that the Government of Madras had got down a net-making machine in the year 1912, after paying a very large amount; it is about Rs. 13,000 or Rs. 15,000—I am speaking subject to correction The machine has not made even a single mesh of net. If we engage the abovenamed officer, we can utilize his services for working the net-making machine and thus make large quantities of nets. So, if Capt. Cribb is to be appointed as the officer in charge of trawler, it will be equally advantageous to us to utilize his services in making nets by means of the machine which is now lying idle at Tanur since 1912."

Diwan Bahadur P. C. ETHIRAJULU NAYUDU :—" Just for my information and that of hon. Members of this House, I wish to know whether the hon. the Development Minister has been very cautious this time so as not to make the same sort of mistake as was committed last time, that is, purchasing an unsuitable vessel on which much money has been wasted. That is the information I want."

* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" Sir, I am for opposing the motion for this supplementary grant, and for these reasons. Like the Department of Industries, the Department of Fisheries has been of very little use to the public and since we lost the hold of the wise hand of Sir Frederick Nicholson there has been a lot of something fishy about the administration of the department (Laughter.) There has been a lot of muddling through and blundering in the administration of the Fisheries Department, and Government have now lost a large amount in a vessel which is not found to be serviceable. What guarantee is there that we shall not get another vessel which may also not prove suitable? The hon. the Minister has

1-15 p.m.

not explained to us that there will not be any such danger. But he has spoken about the views of experts. We have a couple of experts in the department and we had an importation of expert fishery officers, and we have only found that all these experts have committed blunders. I want to know from the hon. the Minister what he is going to do with the old vessel which has cost Rs. 23,000 and whether we can expect at least a thousand rupees by selling it in the market. As a matter of policy and principle, I am against spending any more money in adventures for experimental purposes which in the past, especially after Sir Frederick Nicholson was relieved of his duties of supervision over the Fisheries Department, have proved failures. Having regard to those blunders in the past, if we again vote any more money on these experiments, I am afraid it will prove unwise and foolish as in the past The House is well aware that the Retrenchment Committee proposed the abolition of the Fisheries Department and recommended that several important concerns should be transferred to particular ports who would take better care of those concerns. In regard to pearl fisheries, I am sure that the Port Officer who knows the ins and outs and the history of these fisheries will be able to take better care of them. I am afraid that the fisher-people of Tuticorin have got a great grievance against the department for prohibiting fishing for about fifty miles around which even the Ceylon Government which is more concerned and more interested in this matter have not done. I do not know for whose benefit this sort of meddling with the ancient rights of the people is done. That is a matter which also requires to be enquired into. For these reasons, I would insist and urge upon this House that the Fisheries Department should not be allowed to venture into new enterprises of this sort costing enormous sums of money, about which the hon. the Minister has not assured us that they will not land us in wasteful expenditure in the future. Unless he gives that assurance to us and places figures and details as to whether this money will be wisely spent by experts, not by experts in the sense we had them in the past, but experts who have real knowledge of the conditions in India and Ceylon and around, we ought not to vote this amount "

* Rao Sahib P. V. GOPALAN :—" I just heard the hon. Member from South Kanara saying that the Fisheries Department had been working at a loss. From the published reports, I find last year there has been a profit of Rs. 40,000 if only the expenses under education had been debited to the Education Department. The expenses incurred in connexion with educating the fishers ought to be borne by the Education Department, and in that case the Fisheries Department would have shown a clear profit."

* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" If mercantile audit is applied, I am sure we shall find not a mere loss but a dead loss, a very serious loss. If you apply some sort of old audit, you may show a big profit (laughter). If the capital account is taken from the beginning and the profits reckoned on that basis, I am sure the House will find that there has been a bad loss. I think the Retrenchment Committee has pointed out that there has been no profit whatsoever in the past year considering the interest on capital sunk, etc. It is a matter of concern to us, Mr. President, that these two departments of Industries and Fisheries have cost us enormous amounts with hardly any benefit to the public. Very little has been done in training apprentices in various industries. I know how many hindrances and difficulties

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we have got in admitting our boys into the Chaliyam Canning Factory. Very few people know the art of canning or preserving fish in a scientific method. The Industries Department to be useful should turn out a large number of skilled workmen and train a large number of apprentices. From the figures furnished I have not found more than a dozen or two dozen people trained in these fisheries industries. So I wish to impress upon this House that we should negative this demand to show our disapproval, so that the Government may come forward again with more detailed figures and with a better explanation of their future policy."

* Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" Yesterday, we swallowed such a large amount as Rs. 1·27 lakhs, but we are straining ourselves to-day at this small amount. It only shows that the House wishes to have some reason for its approval or disapproval of these measures, or perhaps as the lunch hour is approaching we are getting fond of talking of fish. (Laughter.) But the difficulty about it is that there has been so much reluctance to readily sanction away thousands of rupees as we have been doing in other matters, simply because it is a matter unfortunately concerning the experts, and whenever it is suggested by experts that a trawler or some other thing should be purchased you and I do not understand anything except that some old rotten thing is to be sold by somebody and that somebody is going to be obliged. And when the vessel last purchased for about Rs. 40,000 by the High Commissioner, probably on the advice or at the instigation of some expert in England, came here, it could only adorn the port but could not leave it. That was the position of the trawler or whatever the transport mechanism that was purchased at a cost of over Rs. 36,000 of the tax-payers' money is called. Now, we want to buy another trawler. Unfortunately the transaction looks fishy. We want to buy a second-hand trawler. Therefore, before the House votes away another Rs. 40,000 of the rate-payers' money, we ought to be assured that we are not going to oblige anybody who is going to sell us an useless trawler.

"The hon. Member Mr. Gopalan wants the trawler to be a sort of maid of all work; it has to be useful for deep sea fishing, for transport, etc. These are matters on which the hon. the Minister can no more give any opinion than I can. I think it better therefore that the hon. the Minister should come forward later on with fuller information as to the real expert who was at the bottom of this recommendation to purchase a second-hand trawler, information as to why a first-hand trawler, a more unsuspicious thing, cannot be got for the money we are going to pay and as to whether we are going to get anything out of the old wreck which adorns the port of Cochin. When the hon. the Minister is able to give fuller information which will carry conviction to the House, I think the House will readily sanction something like Rs. 40,000 of the rate-payers' money."

Mr. GHOUSE MIAN SAHIB :—" Sir, I wish to oppose this grant. The demand for Rs. 44,300 consists of two items, one an item of Rs. 10,200 for pearl fisheries, and another of Rs. 34,100 for purchase of a trawler for conducting deep sea fishing experiments, and for the purpose of engaging a master fisherman to conduct the experiments. I wish especially to oppose the second item. The trawler is said to cost about Rs. 32,000 ; secondly, in order to bring this trawler from England to India it costs about Rs. 16,320 ; for the customs duty a sum of Rs. 3,200 has to be wasted, and another item

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of Rs. 4,140 goes by way of payment to Captain Cribb at the rate of Rs. 690 per mensem as his pay. My submission is that this extraordinary amount of Rs. 34,100 for the purchase of trawler in order to carry on experiments, as the Government has said, is unnecessary. The experiment which the Government is anxious to make is to raise the bed or the source of sardines and another kind of fish which were frequenting the Malabar coast and which have disappeared during the last two years. I think there should be a greater anxiety on the part of Government to keep a contented service and to adopt measures to decrease unemployment than to spend money on items like this for which a large sum of Rs. 34,100 has been demanded from us for the purpose of carrying out experiments on sardines and other kinds of fish in the West Coast. Again, Sir, in the year 1923, the Government spent a large sum of £2,700 for the purchase of a sea-going vessel, called the 'Sea-Scout', and we were told at the end of that year that the ship was found unfit for carrying on the campaign of deep-sea fishing owing to the unsuitability of the vessel for the purpose. The ship was put up for sale and it did not bring any price. And Captain Cribb's services were dispensed with, and now he is to be re-employed for the purpose of experimenting with another trawler at such a cost as Rs. 690 per mensem, and this extraordinarily large demand for Rs. 34,100 has been put before us. We do not know what the running cost would be, and we do not know what the improvements necessary to carry out the other purpose to which this vessel will be put to will come to. Under the circumstances, I think it is not necessary to vote such a large sum as Rs. 34,100 on these trivial experiments."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT (who just then resumed the chair said) :—" I understand that this motion has been going on till now, and I shall ask the hon. the Minister to reply before putting this to the vote."

* Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" This is a matter of serious importance, a matter of principle and policy for the future, and I think this may be held over until the next official day. We have not had occasion to discuss this matter during the budget debate, and so we want to take this opportunity for a full discussion on the matter."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I am sorry I had not the benefit of hearing the hon. Members who spoke on this motion. Do I understand that they are anxious to continue the discussion on another day."

Rao Bahadur CRUZ FERNANDEZ :—" You may allot us ten minutes when we meet after lunch."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I do not think that this is the last item on which the hon. Minister comes before the House for a grant on this head. I believe the same question would be raised in another connexion. I shall now put the grant to the vote of the House."

1-30 p.m.

The Demand was then put to the House and declared carried. Mr. J. A. Saldanha demanded a poll.

After the division bell was rung and before the poll began, * Mr. J. A. Saldanha said :—" Sir, may I raise one point of order ? In this matter it was clearly taken for granted that no further discussion was necessary. But more than one member has signified his intention to speak on the motion. The matter is one of special importance."

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* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Judging from the tenor of the House, I thought the House was anxious to proceed with the vote. Also, having put the question to the House we have no other thing to do than to proceed with the vote."

A poll was then taken with the following result :—

Ayes.

1. The hon. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar.
2. ,, Mr. N. E. Marjoribanks.
3. ,, Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur.
4. ,, Mr. T. E. Moir.
5. ,, Diwan Bahadur T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai.
6. ,, Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. Patro.
7. ,, the Raja of Panagal.
8. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastriyar.
9. ,, E. W. Legh.
10. ,, G. T. Boag.
11. ,, G. T. H. Bracken.
12. Muhammad Abdulla Ghatala Sahib.
13. Mr. S. Arpudaswami Udayar.
14. Rao Sahib T. C. Tangavelu Pillai
15. Rai Bahadur Sir K. Venkatareddi Nayudu.
16. Mr. P. K. S. A. Arumuga Nadar
17. ,, A. Ramaswami Mudaliyar.
18. Diwan Bahadur P. C. Ethirajulu Nayudu.
19. Rao Sahib P. V. Gopalan.
20. Mr. L. C. Guruswami.
21. Rao Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Nayudu.
22. Mr. J. Kuppuswami.
23. Raja of Kurupam
24. Mr. R. Madanagopal Nayudu.
25. Hony. Lieutenant Madurai.
26. Mr. T. Mallesappa.
27. ,, B. Muniswami Nayudu.
28. ,, P. C. Muttu Chettiyar.
29. ,, B. Obalesappa.
30. ,, K. Prabhakaran Tampan.
31. ,, G. Premayya.
32. ,, K. Raghuchandra Bellal.
33. ,, B. Ramachandra Reddi.
34. Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai.
35. Mr. C. Gopala Menon.
36. ,, P. Sagaram.
37. ,, K. Sitarama Reddi.
38. ,, Chavadi K. Subramania Pillai.
39. Rao Sahib P. V. S. Sundaramurti.
40. Diwan Bahadur W. Vijayaraghava Mudaliyar.
41. Mr. K. Venkatachala Padayachi.
42. ,, T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai.
43. ,, Hamid Sultan Marakkayar.
44. ,, Abdul Hye Sahib Bahadur.
45. ,, Qadir Muhi-ud-din Sahib.
46. Khan Bahadur P. Kahlif-ul-lah Sahib Bahadur.
47. Mr. Moidu Sahib Bahadur.
48. Diwan Bahadur K. Suryanarayanamurti Nayudu.

Noes.

1. Rao Bahadur C. V. S. Narasimha Raju.
2. Rao Bahadur A. S. Krishna Rao Pantulu.
3. Mr. J. A. Saldanha.
4. ,, P. C. Venkatapati Raju.
5. ,, T. Adinarayana Chettiyar.
6. Sriman Biswanath Das Mahasayo.
7. Mr. K. Koti Reddi.
8. ,, C. Maruthavanam Pillai.
9. ,, V. Pantulu Ayyar.
10. Mr. H. Peddi Raju.
11. ,, G. Rameswara Rao.
12. ,, M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar.
13. ,, M. Sitayya.
14. ,, Ghouse Mian Sahib.
15. ,, R. Srinivasa Ayyangar.
16. ,, V. C. Vellingiri Gounder.
17. ,, B. Venkatratnam.

The motion was carried and the Grant made, 48 hon. Members voting *for* the motion and 17 hon. Members *against*.

VII

DURATION OF THE COUNCIL SITTINGS.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I have now to announce to the House whether there will be a sitting of the House on Saturday. Since it has now become inevitable that the House should sit for one or two more days after Friday next in order to get through the official business the bulk of which is still left over, and since there are certain committees sitting on Saturday, I wish to know whether hon. Members would like to sit on Saturday for the business of the House."

Rai Bahadur Sir K. VENKATAREDDI NAYUDU :—" May I mention one thing, Sir ? We having had the least intention that the House would continue the sitting even on Saturday certain conferences have been arranged to come